

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—FEBRUARY 8, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - is establishing a new inter-disciplinary Water Management and Policy Centre called 'AquaMAP' to solve water problems in India.**
- ✓ The Centre is being established with support from IIT Madras Alumni who are providing a seed grant commitment of ₹3 crore for a period of two years to create a five year plan
- ✓ This Centre will provide smart solutions for challenging water problems by designing models using innovative technologies
- ✓ These models would be implemented at chosen locations across the country
- ✓ The Centre aims to complete successful pilot studies in at least six water innovation villages / towns, that can be showcased as replicable models for water management and policy implementation, within the country
- ✓ It also seeks to set up a state-of-the-art Hydro-Informatics Laboratory and solve at least three chronic water issues through Grand Challenges
- ✓ AquaMap has a governing body chaired by Director IIT Madras and an advisory board with many eminent and well established people in the area of water technology, management and policy.

STATES

- ✓ **On February 7, Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan - gave his assent to the ordinance promulgated by the Left government in the state to curb the powers of the Lokayukta.**
- ✓ The ordinance amends the Kerala Lokayukta Act, 1999, to allow the state government to “either accept or reject the verdict of the Lokayukta after an opportunity of being heard”.
- ✓ The Lokayukta is appointed by the governor of a state to address complaints about working of the government and public servants.

- ✓ Currently, under Section 14 of the Act, a public servant is required to vacate office if directed by the Lokayukta
- ✓ The amendment means that a verdict of the Lokayukta will be of the nature of a recommendation, rather than being a binding decision.
- ✓ Now its verdict can be accepted or rejected by a competent authority constituted by the executive
- ✓ The Kerala Lokayukta Act was enacted by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] government led by E K Nayanar in 1999

NATIONAL

- **On February 7, Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya - virtually launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush 4.0**



- ✓ The fourth round of the Universal Immunisation Programme aims to protect children and pregnant women from life-threatening diseases
- ✓ Under this world's largest inoculation drive, annually over 3 crore pregnant women and 2.6 crore children are covered
- ✓ The mission Indradhanush 4.0 will have three rounds and will be conducted in 416 districts across 33 states and UTs
- ✓ The 1st round of the mission will start from February to April and will cover 11 states including Assam, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura and Chhattisgarh.
- ✓ The second round will cover 22 states from April to May in states and UTs, including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Telangana, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Odisha.
- ✓ Mission Indradhanush was also identified as one of the flagship schemes under Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (16,850 villages across 541 districts) and Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (48,929 villages across 112 aspirational districts)

- ✓ With the aim to increase the full immunisation coverage, PM Modi launched Mission Indradhanush in December 2014
- ✓ The initiative seeks to cover the partially and unvaccinated pregnant women and children in pockets of low immunization coverage, high-risk and hard-to-reach areas and protect them from vaccine-preventable diseases
- ✓ Till date, ten phases of Mission Indradhanush have been completed covering 701 districts across the country.
- ✓ As on April 2021, a total of 3.86 crore children and 96.8 lakh pregnant women have been vaccinated
- ✓ The Full Immunization Coverage among children aged 12-23 months of age has increased from 62% percent (NFHS-4) to 76.4% (NFHS-5).

APPOINTMENTS

- **Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit - has become the first woman to hold the position of vice-chancellor at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).**



- ✓ She was appointed by the Ministry of Education on February 7 for five years from the date she assumes the charge as the 13th vice-chancellor of the JNU
- ✓ A professor of political science at the Savitribai Phule Pune University in Maharashtra since 1992, Pandit has been appointed for a period of five years
- ✓ She is currently the Vice-Chancellor of Savitribai Phule University in Maharashtra
- ✓ Born in St Petersburg, Russia, Pandit did her schooling in Chennai.
- ✓ She did her BA in history and social psychology in 1983 from Presidency College, Chennai after being ranked first in the university and received a gold medallist.
- ✓ She also did her MA from the Presidency College in 1985 where she ranked second in the university
- ✓ Pandit is also an alumna of JNU from where she did her MPhil and Ph.D. in International Relations in 1986 and 1990 respectively from its School of International Studies
- ✓ A polyglot, who speaks six languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, English, Hindi and Sanskrit, the 59-year-old Pandit, started her teaching career in 1988 at

Goa University as a political science lecturer and moved in 1993 to Pune University

- ✓ She has also been a member of the University Grants Commission (UGC), the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), and visitor's nominee to central universities.
 - ✓ She has been a resource at the military intelligence training school, Pune, on Asia-Pacific Region and India's security perceptions since 1995.
 - ✓ She also authored books like 'Parliament and Foreign Policy in India' (1990) and 'Restructuring Environmental governance in Asia-Ethics and Policy' 2003.
 - ✓ Pandit has published more than 170 research papers and articles in reputed journals on political science and foreign policy.
 - ✓ M Jagadesh Kumar, who was holding the charge of acting VC at JNU after his five-year term ended last year, was appointed as the chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) on February 4
- **Sukla Mistry - has taken over as Director (Refineries) of Indian Oil and became the first woman Director on the board of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's largest oil refining and fuel marketing company.**



- ✓ She is also a nominee director of Indian Oil on the Board of Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited and the 60 MMTPA Ratnagiri Refinery & Petrochemical Ltd, the world's largest grassroots refinery project coming up in Maharashtra.
- ✓ Mistry will continue to hold the post of non-executive director on the board of IHBL, a joint venture company of three leading oil and gas central PSUs
- ✓ Mistry has an experience of over 35 years in the areas of refining and petrochemicals and has worked at IOC's refineries at Barauni, Digboi, Haldia and Panipat
- ✓ She has been honoured with a number of awards in her career, including Petrofed Best Woman Executive Award (2009), Petrotech Ojaswini Award (2016), SCOPE Award for Outstanding Woman Manager (2016-17) and ET Prime Women Manufacturing and Operational Leadership Award (2021)
- ✓ She headed Digboi refinery in Assam, the oldest in the country

- ✓ She was the only Indian woman selected for deputation to Qatar Petroleum (at Qatar site) in April 2004 and Emirates National Oil Company (Dubai) in March 2002 for the execution of the mega Linear Alkaline Benzene Project
- ✓ IOC is the nation's top refiner with a group refining capacity of 80.55 million tonnes per annum (1.64 million barrels per day).
- **Renowned scientist and launch vehicle specialist Dr S Unnikrishnan Nair - took charge as the director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) on February 7**



- ✓ VSSC is a key space research centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and specialises in rocket and space vehicles for satellite programs
- ✓ Nair replaces its previous director S Somnath, who was appointed the chairman of ISRO, Space Secretary, and chairman of the Space Commission.
- ✓ Previously, Nair served as the first director of the newly set up Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) in Bengaluru, in support of India's ambitious Gaganyaan program to send a crewed mission into orbit in 2023
 - ✓ The HSFC was inaugurated on 30 January 2019 at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) headquarters in Bengaluru
- ✓ Nair was the Member-Secretary of the study team for Space Capsule Recovery Experiment (SRE) and deputy project director of SRE for Deceleration and Recovery systems
- ✓ He served as deputy director, Structures Entity of VSSC till January 2017 concurrently with human space flight technology development
- ✓ Nair has obtained his BTech in mechanical engineering from Kerala University, masters in aerospace engineering from IISC, Bengaluru, and PhD in mechanical engineering from IIT Madras, Chennai
- ✓ He also led the technology development for the Crew Escape System, and was the mission director for the Pad Abort Test held in July 2018.
- ✓ He has received a number of awards from ISRO, including the ISRO team excellence award for his work on SRE, the ISRO excellence award as team leader award for his work on CARE, and the ISRO individual merit award for his contributions to the human spaceflight programme.

- ✓ He received an honorary doctorate from Sathyabama University in 2019 for outstanding contributions towards human space flight activities.
- ✓ Nair is a life member of the Aeronautical society of India, Systems society of India, Acoustical society of India and Astronautical society of India among others.
- ✓ He is also the president of National Society for Aerospace and Related Mechanism (INSARM)'s Trivandrum chapter

